132 districts including 32 districts affected by left wing extremism. Ten districts of Madhya Pradesh have been identified for special assistance under the Backward Districts Initiative of RSVY.

Land for the unemployed

†*452. SHRI ISAM SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether 2/3rd part of cultivable plain land in the country is lying unused with the Government; and

(b) if so, what is the plan of Government to provide employment to the unemployed persons from out of the said land?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development has intimated that the total wasteland in the country is 63.85 million hectares, which is 20.17% of the total geographical area of the country. Out of 49.78 million hectares of non-forest wastelands, the treatable non-forest wasteland is estimated as 30.35 million hectares. Area Development Projects like Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP), Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) and Desert Development Programme (DDP) are executed to bring treatable wastelands under cultivation through a participatory approach that seeks to secure close involvement of user-communities. The broad objective of these programmes is to promote overall economic development and improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the resource poor sections of people inhabiting the programme areas.

Besides, the Department of the Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development also implements two employment schemes namely, the Swamajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) and the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY). The SGSY is a self-employment scheme and it aims to alleviate rural poverty by assisting the rural poor through self-employment opportunities. Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY). is a programme for providing additional wage employment, infrastructure development and food security in the rural

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

.

areas. The SGRY is open for all rural poor who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual and unskilled work in and around his village/habitat.

Agro-based industries in Uttaranchal

†*453. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of small and tiny agro based industries alongwith the number of persons employed therein in Uttaranchal;

(b) whether Government are aware of the fact that a large number of such small cottage and rural industries have been closed down during last few years; and

(c) if so, the number of industries so closed and the number of persons rendered unemployed as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) So far, 1794 rural industries, including agro based industries, have been set up generating 29,369 employment opportunities, in the State of Uttaranchal under the Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP) of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).

(b) No, Sir. However, some units do close down.

(c) Such information is not maintained centrally.

Modernisation of Postal Department

*454. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what measures the Department of Posts is taking towards its modernisation;

(b) how optimally the Department of Posts is utilising the V-Sats;

(c) the details of the centres that are covered by V-Sat in the country, State-wise; and

(d) what sort of business the Department of Posts is looking for, apart from regular post and e-post?

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

.